

The main goal of this work was to describe a background of political combat between the so-called clerical and progressive part of population in Zlin in the first decade of 20th century and also to focus on the achievements of the progressive council, led by the mayor Frantisek Stepanek. The town expanded dramatically during this period. Zlin population was suddenly rising and also the importance of the town as a natural centre of the region grew in a close connection with the economic progress (foundation of the Bata Company and other shoemaking firms).

The victory of the progressive groups in local election in 1908 was very important as it brought a release of the tension into Zlin's political life on the one hand and it enlivened the importance of the town as a political, administrative, economic and transport centre on the other hand.

It was achieved to establish a district court based in Zlin, the new council was working on improvement of the life standard of Zlin inhabitants. A council power station was built, new roads connecting Zlin with surrounding villages were constructed, a telephone connection was established, a sewerage system was developed and streets in the town were cobbled ... Fundamental steps were taken to start works on a regulation of the Drevnice River and on a local railway construction.

Also Professor Tomas G. Masaryk, who was elected as a member of the Austrian parliament as a representative of the Wallachian towns in 1907 - 1911, had a great merit in enforcing the interest in Zlin matters.

From the 1890's until 1914 Zlin passed through the first important period of its development. After the WWI, which meant the beginning of the boom for Bata, the biggest shoemaking company in Zlin, the town entered the independent Czechoslovak state as a significant city that was prepared to become the centre of the shoemaking industry and the model of a booming city.